24 october 1946

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Rework

REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

THE PROBLEM

1. To study and report on the future status of psychological strategy and recommend:

   a. A peacetime organization for keeping psychological strategy in a ready-for-mobilization status;

   b. A wartime psychological strategy organization;

   both organizations to be assigned such directives as will insure effective planning, coordination and implementation, particularly with respect to the integration of national psychological strategy with military plans.

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM AND DISCUSSION

2. (Definition).

3. For further FBOP and Discussion, see Appendix "B".

CONCLUSIONS

4. It is concluded that:

   a. Psychological strategy is an important auxiliary aid in the achievement of national aims and military objectives.

   b. The State Department has the primary responsibility for national policy determination in [   ] psychological strategy. 'ILLEGIB

   c. The Army and the Navy have a (definite) interest in psychological strategy policy determination, particularly insofar as

this policy affects the military security of the United States.

d.   There is need for a permanent sub-committee of SWNCC to serve as a planning body, to continuously study the problems of psychological strategy, to formulate and present plans for coordination of psychological strategy in time of peace, and for coordinated direction of psychological strategy in time of war.

e.   All agencies of the government should be required to assist in appropriate implementation of approved psychological strategy plans.

f.   The implementation of psychological strategy plans and directives in a military theater of operations or projected operations should be an active responsibility of the Theater Commander concerned.

g.   The Central Intelligence Group, NIA, should assume direct responsibility for those special functions of psychological strategy, which were formerly assigned to the Office of Strategic Services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.   It is recommended that:

a.   The SWNCC approve the CONCLUSIONS in paragraph 4, above.

b.   The SWNCC transmit this report by Memorandum (Appendix "A") to the President for approval of Annex "A" to Appendix "A" (an Executive Order to implement the conclusion in paragraph 4 g, above) and Annex "B" to Appendix "A" (a charter for the agency proposed in paragraph 4 d, above).

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_c._   After favorable action by the President on _b_, preceding,
this report be transmitted to the State, War and Navy Departments,
and the Director, Central Intelligence Group, for guidance and
appropriate measures of implementation.

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APPENDIX

Estimate of the Effectiveness of Allied

Psychological Warfare in

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Estimate of the Effectiveness of Allied Psychological Warfare in World War II

1. The strategic objectives of Allied Psychological Warfare in World War II were:

    a) to diminish the will of the enemy to fight,

    b) to sustain the morale of the populations of countries occupied by the enemy, and

    c) to convince neutral countries of the ultimate victory of the Allies.

2. Psychological Warfare was waged in many different forms, and, in keeping with the character of the war, was world-wide in scope.

    An estimate of the effectiveness of this invisible arm requires the painstaking study of great quantities of evidence, and a careful appraisal of this material according to precise criteria which have not yet been defined.

    It is however possible to indicate certain results which, by common consent, were achieved by Psychological Warfare in the last war.

    This committee has reviewed such evidence as it had at its disposal, and has drawn on the experience of its members in order to arrive at the conclusions set forth at the end of this chapter.

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3. The ultimate justification of Psychological Warfare is that it helps to win wars. To what extent our use of Psychological Warfare in the last war may be said to have contributed to victory may still be open to question, but there is no doubt whatsoever that each of the major participants in World War II made use of this arm in all the varied forms to which it lends itself.

4. There are two essential points of difference between the use made by the enemy and by the allies of psychological warfare:

    a) The enemy started exploiting the psychological possibilities of political warfare and subversion long before the shooting was started in 1939. By coordinated overt action through the public media of information, and by coordinated covert action, involving subversion and other secret activities designed to impair and prepare the morale of intended victims of aggression, the initial execution of the enemy's military plans was greatly facilitated. It may therefore be said that the effectiveness of psychological warfare, as practiced by the enemy in times of de jure peace, may be measured in terms of military gains in times of de jure war. On the other hand, the contries which leagued themselves only gradually against the aggression of Germany, Italy and Japan, developed coordinated Psychological Warfare after they became the victims of aggression. The intimate dovetailing, therefore, of

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political and psychological warfare which is only possible on the condition that the two form part of a preconcerted plan of aggression, was the prerogative of the aggressor nations.

b) While the technical means used by the Allies during the war were similar to those used by the enemy, the basic strategy was entirely different. The enemy became increasingly unable to relate its psychological warfare to facts, because the picture which facts painted would have been discouraging to the enemy's own morale. We, on the other hand, strove by every means we could to publicize facts, because the realization of these facts was discouraging to the enemy and encouraging to our friends. This distinction has been defined as the "strategy of truth", versus the "strategy of falsehood". If the ethical factor is abstracted, the definition will stand. From the spring and summer of 1941 onward, the enemy was forced, because of the "facts of the situation" to dissimulate or contest these facts, and substitute other "pseudo-facts", which became the less plausible (hence the more ineffectual) as the war wore on, and as the "strategy of truth" of the Allies verified itself.

5. It may therefore be said that Psychological Warfare is only successful if waged by a country, or a group of countries, that dispose of ultimately superior military resources.

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To concede this is not to diminish the value of the role of Psychological Warfare. It is, however, necessary to see Psychological Warfare in its correct perspective and to realize, without exaggerating them, its potentialities and limitations, in view of the often irresponsible claims and condemnations of which it has at times been made the object.

6. Allied Psychological Warfare directed against enemy civilian morale was greatly assisted by the efforts of enemy leaders to deny what the Allies were, in fact, going to prove. E.g.: when Goering stated publicly that no Allied bomb would ever drop on German soil, he strengthened the morale of the German people. When it became evident that he had been mistaken in his forecast, the Allies took the opportunity of reminding the German people of what Goering had said. Emphasis on this theme, by radio and leaflets, constituted Psychological Warfare in that it sought to diminish the enemy's will to fight by impairing the faith of the German people in its leaders.

Again, when Hitler, in October 1941 and on other occasions, proclaimed that the Red Army was destroyed, he gave the German people a moral lift which made subsequent disillusionment all the more bitter. From Stalingrad onward, Axis and Japanese troops, as well as the peoples of those countries, were suitably reminded of the false claims of the Fuehrer. Front line enemy troops at Monte Cassino were told that the Russians were nearer to Berlin than they were, and leaflets quoted the phrases of the German

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leaders of two years before.

How can one estimate the net military effectiveness of such invisible warfare? The surrender of an enemy unit at a critical moment may have been determined by the realization of the hopelessness of the situation, created in part by our radio, leaflets and subversive rumors. This surrender may have meant the saving of American lives, a gain in time, and the success of some other, intangibly related military operation.

7. For the purpose of this summary report, the subject under discussion may be conveniently considered under the following headings:

   a) Psychological Warfare directed against enemy troops

   b) Psychological Warfare directed against enemy civilians,

   c) Psychological Warfare in its relation to occupied populations.

   d) Other Psychological Warfare achievements

8. a) <u>Psychological Warfare directed against enemy troops</u>

   Front line troops <i>in contact</i> do not have easy access to radio, and are therefore \principally\ vulnerable to leaflets disseminated <u>by artillery.</u> This form of dissemination provides pinpoint accuracy of distribution, and up to the minute content of the leaflet. The first large-scale use of leaflets against front-line troops by the American Army was in Tunisia and Sicily, in the late spring and summer of 1943. Deserters frequently

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came across the lines holding these leaflets in their hands,
and towards the end of the campaign in each area, large
bodies of men surrendered in the manner and at the places
specified in the leaflets. While there is no way of knowing
to what extent the decision of the deserters, or of the sur-
rendering units was influenced by the content of the leaflets
they had read, it is evident that they attached a certain im-
portance to them, and believed that they represented the view
of the Command of the troops they were facing.

As the allied offensive in the Mediterranean theater
developed, so the role of front-line leaflets increased in
importance. Both the 5th and the 8th armies in Italy called
for additional leaflet activities, and also used mobile front-
line radio units.

The best testimony to the effectiveness of these operations
is that the combat forces in all theaters asked for them and
used them increasingly.

For the invasion of France, both SHAEF in Northern Europe
and AFHQ in the Mediterranean created large psychological
warfare units to accompany the invasion troops in the early
waves. Extensive technical research was undertaken so as to
improve the dissemination of shell-fired leaflets and
to facilitate the rapid printing of leaflets.

Leaflet operations directed toward enemy garrisons preced-
ing the landings in Normany and in Southern France were on a
tremendous scale and assumed the character of tactical front

line Psychological Warfare. Accurate droppings of leaflets on Mongolian, Armenian and Ukranian divisions in the German Army sought to influence these elements in their own language.

Explicit instructions in the event of invasion were disseminated for the benefit of the local population, both in order to facilitate our eventual landings, and to keep the enemy garrisons on tenterhooks.

In both the European and the Pacific theaters, evidence points to increasing utilization and flexibility of the leaflet directed toward enemy troops, with valuable results.

b) **Psychological Warfare directed against enemy civilians.**

The day to day radio output in enemy languages over more than two dozen short-wave transmitters was supplemented by periodical leaflet campaigns which hammered home a theme intended to impair the will to fight and the general morale of enemy civilians. Information of this nature was directed with increasing selectivity toward civilian areas and certain groups of the population. E.g.: factory-workers were made sensitive to past and future bombing; allies of the Germans were impressed with defeats of German troops, the use made by the German High Command of the nationals of their allies, and criticism of their allies by German troops. When thousands of Italian soldiers were abandoned by the Germans in the Libyan desert in November 1942, this fact was brought to the

attention of the Italian people, and dramatized through
leaflets and broadcast interviews with Italian prisoners.
There is evidence that this had a deep effect on Italian
home morale.

In the closing days of the war against Japan, it was
of the greatest importance that the notion of surrender
should be presented to the Japanese government in a manner
which would make it possible for it to reconcile this step
with the characteristics of the national psychology. The
OWI broadcasts were carefully phrased accordingly, and
directed toward the Emperor and his cabinet. The evidence
here does not indicate conclusively that Psychological
Warfare shortened the war, but does suggest that it
facilitated acceptance of our conditions of surrender.

e) Psychological Warfare in its relation to occupied populations

Before the British evacuated France in 1940, they
arranged for short-wave radio sets and agents to remain be-
hind, so that communications with London were maintained and
gradually increased throughout the period of enemy occupation.

The publicity given to General de Gaulle and the "Free
French" movement by the BBC undoubtedly assisted the develop-
ment of the resistance movement, which was paralleled in
other occupied countries.

The military value of Psychological Warfare became
evident in such campaigns as the "V" sign, which encouraged
local underground activities, harassed the enemy and prob-

ably contributed to the increase and decentralization of enemy garrisons.

The coordination of underground action with military invasion plans resulted in extremely effective local action. Such coordination was achieved by means of coded radio messages, leaflet operations, and special agents. An example of local action which contributed to our military successes in the delay to which two German armored divisions were subjected when they tried to move up to the Normandy beachhead from near Toulouse. This gain of three days at a critical juncture could not have been achieved without the closest integration of psychological and "shooting" warfare.

The numerous instructions to the civilian populations in occupied areas were conveyed to them by radio and by leaflets, and there is evidence that they helped to reduce loss of life among civilians and to facilitate the movement of our troops after the landings. Throughout the occupation, the stimulation of moral resistance to the invader, and of coordinated active resistance by Psychological Warfare media, undoubtedly paid off and reduced the number of our battle casualties in achieving final victory.

d) Other Psychological Warfare achievements

When the Germans invaded Norway early in 1940, most of the Norwegian merchant fleet was at sea. Ships are

particularly accessible to short-wave broadcasts for technical reasons, and the BBC and American private stations were not slow to urge the captains of Norwegian ships to head for British and Allied ports. Evidence shows that a considerable proportion of the Norwegian fleet heard and heeded these messages, and that Allied tonnage was thereby substantially increased.

In the early fall of 1943, the Italian island-fortress of Pantellaria was attacked from the sea and from the air by the Allies. Of the ultimate fate of the island there could be no doubt, but the assembly and diversion of the forces and manpower required for this operation represented an additional strain which it was imperative should be as *brief as possible.*

The attack was accompanied by radio and leaflet threats, and instructions to the Commander of the Island as to what measures must be taken to signify surrender. Prompt compliance with these instructions by the enemy garrison ensured the rapid success of the attack, and gained the Allies several hours if not days.

When Italy capitulated in September 1943, the Italian fleet came over to the Allies, with the exception of the battleship Roma which was sunk by enemy aerial action, and a few small units. The appeal to the Italian fleet was launched, on the wave-length used by the fleet, by the United Nations Radio at AFHQ in Algiers. It may be that

the fleet would have decided to come over in any case. It is, however, likely that if this contingency had not been foreseen by PWB, AFHQ, and the technical measures prepared, the Italian fleet would have been brought under enemy attack before it could have moved. The gain of a few hours at the critical point represented an invaluable military advantage.

In addition to numerous examples of a similar nature, the history of Psychological Warfare in World War II reveals effective use of the media at its disposal, such as instructions to Chinese civilians for the care and return of allied aviators shot down over China.

Psychological Warfare was not invented, it grew because it answers a need in modern warfare, which is waged not by professional soldiers, sailors and aviators alone, but by the entire nation.

There may be doubts as to the exact degree of its effectiveness, but it is this committee's opinion that it is an indispensable part of military planning and operations.

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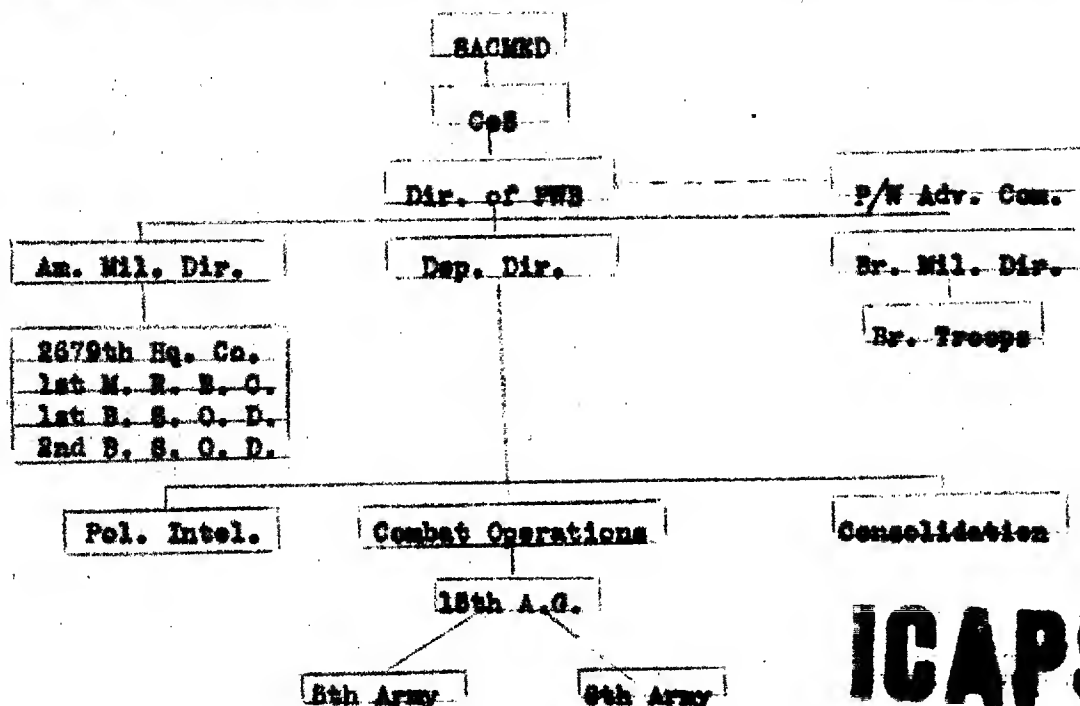### Resumé of Organisation of
Psychological Warfare Branch, AFHQ

The Psychological Warfare Branch of Allied Force Headquarters evolved as a thoroughly integrated British-American, military-civilian agency. It retained that characteristic throughout the campaigns in Africa, Italy, Southern France and Austria.

Although the initiative which created it was provided by the Office of War Information, it was kept under firm military control by General Eisenhower, as a Branch of the Information and Censorship Section. When the Supreme Command passed to General Wilson, however, an OWI civilian was named Chief of PWB, with a British civilian deputy. Psychological Warfare was then raised to the status of a special function of the General Staff, with responsibility direct to the Chief of Staff or to the Supreme Allied Commander himself.

The American and British military components of the team were under the command of an American colonel and a British brigadier, respectively, who were charged not only with the command of their own troops but with the general military housekeeping, security and supply of the integrated unit.

The guiding directives came from the Combined Chiefs of Staff through OWI and PWE. Upon these directives the localized PWB directive was compiled weekly by a special Psychological Warfare Advisory Committee appointed by interested general staff agencies.

Most of the expenses of PWB were met by OWI, although the British War Ministry made token contributions to the work.